

Department of Land and Natural Resources

Sustainability Hotspot

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SOUTH MAUI COASTLINE

**Kealia to Makena,
including the
Humpback Whale
Sanctuary**

~Island of Maui~



Top to bottom: Aerial of South Maui Coastline, Little Beach at Makena, whale wintering off Maui coast.

The southern coast of Maui is a major hotspot for the Department of Land and Natural Resources. No where else in the State are we faced with such a combination of management problems all at the same time. A whale sanctuary, a shoal that is a major tourist attraction, historic sites along the coastline among dozens of coastal trails, beaches and resorts offering dozens of ocean recreation opportunities; these are just a few of the resources DLNR must manage in this area.

During a 1988 Division of Aquatic Resources survey, Maui residents voiced concern about:

- overfishing;
- user conflicts;
- algae blooms;
- poor water quality;
- the loss of beach accesses.

The marine ecosystem including fisheries are being impacted by the development of coastal areas, improvements in technology, and growing population demands. These impacts include:

- coastal erosion;
- loss of wetlands;
- the loss of public access;
- increased drainage runoff that carries nutrients and sediment.

The increasing population has also resulted in more user conflicts and crowded beach areas. The demand by the public to use and access shoreline areas for ocean recreation, fishing and gathering has been increasing. Technological improvements in ocean recreation from boogie boards, windsurf boards, kayaks, in addition to new fishing, boating, and diving equipment have attracted more people to the ocean.

The following are some of the other management issues faced by DLNR.

- Many historic and cultural sites have not been assessed. These cultural resources, unlike living organisms, are non-renewable and finite. Once lost, they are gone forever.



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~Island of Maui~



Top to bottom: Seawalls along the South Maui Coastline are preventing the replenishment of natural sand beaches, Keawakapu artificial reef provides haven for fish populations, vessels making use of day moorings off Molokini Shoal, swimmers enjoying rich diversity of coral and marine life in waters surrounding Molokini.

■ The Division of Forestry and Wildlife's Na Ala Hele (Trails to Go On) Trails and Access Program has identified, inventoried and mapped over 50 shoreline accesses from MacGregor Point to La Perouse Bay.

■ As the beaches along the South Maui Coastline have steadily disappeared, seawalls were built to protect private property. These structures, the rising sea level and other hard structures have significantly reduced the natural replenishment of sand to many beaches.

■ The presence of threatened and endangered species such as the green and hawksbill turtles, the humpback whale, and monk seal are good signs for the future. However, their interactions with people may have some long-term negative impacts and could affect their survival in the wild.

■ Since 1989, hawksbill turtle nests have been excavated on the South Maui Coastline beaches. Last year, two of three confirmed hawksbill nests hatched in the Kihei Beach Reserve. The reserve area has helped reduce the impact of lights and development from encroachment on the shoreline.

■ The Keawakapu Artificial Reef was re-established in January 1989 with concrete/tire modules. In 1997, a long-line vessel was sunk on the reef to provide a wreck for scuba diving. The artificial reef has been successful in creating a productive fishing spot and an alternative diving location that helps relieve congestion at Molokini Shoal.

■ The Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary was established on June 6, 1997. The area includes 600 square miles of State waters around Kauai, Oahu, Molokai, Lanai, Maui, and the Big Island.

■ Temporary moorings, established in 1988 at Molokini Shoal, have helped reduce coral damaged from anchoring. The chains have corroded and temporary moorings need to be replaced. In 10 years, the number of passengers visiting Molokini has almost doubled to 1,240 passengers per day during peak season. In the next two years, 17 new bow moorings are planned for Molokini.

■ DLNR's Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation plans to establish approximately 20 day-use moorings spaced along the South Maui coast to disperse diving to designated sites and prevent illegal mooring in unauthorized areas.

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Top to bottom: Both Green Sea Turtles and Hawksbill Turtles frequent the waters of the South Maui Coastline, Dawn Patrol volunteers inspect evidence that a turtle came ashore, drift fences are put in place to protect sea turtles.

DLNR'S Sustainability Hotspot Team for the South Maui Coastline:

Skippy Hau - Aquatic Resources, Maui, 243-5834;

Michael Baker - Forestry and Wildlife;

Boyd Dixon - Historic Preservation;

Emily Gardner - Aquatic Resources;

Sam Lemmo - Land Division;

Floyd Miyazono - State Parks;

Phil Ohta - Land Division;

Chuck Penque - Boating and Ocean Recreation;

is responsible for managing these resources.

DLNR's Vision for the Future and How to Attain It

In the department's plan for the future:

- carrying capacity of Molokini MLCD will be established using the limits of acceptable change process;
- the Humpback Whale Sanctuary will be supported;
- overall near-shore conditions and resources will improve;
- the impact of popular aquatic locations will be addressed;
- Conservation and Resources Enforcement will patrol the shoreline regularly and provide safety for both resources and the public;
- conflicts between ocean users will be reduced as fishing and gathering improves;
- mooring areas will be established to reduce the number of illegal moorings, accidental groundings, and lessen the chance for pollution spills and accidents;
- permanent day-use moorings will be established and anchoring will be prohibited in the Molokini MLCD;
- dive locations will be scattered to provide convenient and safe moorings, resulting in reduced crowding and improve safety for snorkelers and divers in the water;
- no structures would be allowed in beach reserve areas. Open space and shoreline vistas would be maintained and promoted.

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Above: The Maui Brownies help clean up Kealia.

One key step to achieving DLNR's future vision for the South Maui Coastline is the maintenance of partnerships with Malama Kai Foundation, the Ocean Recreation Council, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service volunteers and 15 other organizations like the Cub Scouts, Brownies, the Kihei Canoe Club and the Kiwanis Club of Kihei Wailea.

The second key step toward DLNR's future vision includes acquisition of one Aquatic Biologist, one Archaeologist, one Land Agent, one Na Ala Hele Trails & Access Technician, five Enforcement Officers, two Fishery Technicians, two Park Caretakers, additional Lifeguards, two Clerks, field equipment, vehicles, necessary office supplies, and communication equipment.

Including a special appropriation for land acquisition and necessary archaeological inventory surveys, the total budget for the effort comes to just over \$5 million in the first year and significantly less in successive years due to start-up costs. 🌺



DLNR's Hotspot Team for the South Maui Coastline: (top row, l-r) Hau, Baker, Dixon, (middle row) Gardner, Lemmo, Miyazono, (bottom row) Ohta, Penque.